

Gypsies
Can be done
Tues or Thurs to meet Vande

CITY OF LEICESTER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

CITY OF LEICESTER TRAINING COLLEGE

SCRAPTOFT
LEICESTER

Principal
F. C. A. CAMMAERTS, D.S.O., M.A.

7-051 1966
Gypsy Organisation

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Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter dated January 31st, 1966.

Regarding my arrangements concerning the 'Gypsy Problem' and the possibility of forming an organisational basis from which to approach this problem at national level I have not made much progress. This is mainly because the person who has most contact with those 'names' interested in Gypsies has been ill during the last two months and our meetings have been few and brief. Furthermore I believe the Ministry of Housing and Local Government are near to drafting their report on the census of Gypsies conducted in March 1965, and this is certain to contain recommendations which might have influence on the type and structure of any possible organisation formed. A few 'names' personally known to me include: Professor Richard Hoggart, who has shown interest in my activities in the Gypsy sphere on many occasions, now with a community studies biased department under his control at Birmingham University he might be willing to lend his name. Similarly Professor Ben Morris of Bristol University Institute of Education has shown interest in the results produced so far. Mr A.V.H. Marsden, Chief Public Health Inspector of Eton Rural District Council, has personal knowledge of this problem as he was instrumental in establishing the Iver Camp Site for travellers. My own Principal Francis Cammaerts has always shown interest in this work but as he is leaving England this summer I hesitate to include his name. It is I think necessary to establish the basic requirements of such an organisation and at this level I am somewhat 'woolly' at the moment - however when the Ministry document emerges some of this may be resolved and I think we shall find that what is principally needed is a group who can acquaint a larger number of people with the plight of the 'traveller', as I am sure that the Ministry circular will place the emphasis on Local Authority development of sites rather than advocate a national plan.

Turning to more personal matters; I hope to embark upon a period of investigation attempting to delineate the environment of deprivation and limitation of a gypsy child and consider whether such a background is the root cause of their social inadequacy. To do this it will be necessary to contact schools in areas where Gypsy sites are maintained and make comparative studies between intellectual growth of Gypsy children at school and those who never receive any formal education. This will be made somewhat more complicated by test procedures and the acknowledged facts being that frequently a child's constructive process of reasoning problems tested in non-verbal schemes diminishes as literate ability develops. It would be interesting to study late-starters at school and make intensive study of their educational growth over a limited period.

Further investigation would be initiated concerning the potency of Family and Kinship ties and obligations, possibly using the Jackson Family Attitude Tests. Investigation of the elaborate kinship universe of certain families from a historical basis and a contrast with the nucleated economic family unit of contemporary travellers. The modified patterns of family life, e.g., change from horses and wagons to motors and trailers and its relation to status assenting, status dissenting concepts. A stricter codifying of the emergent status systems and a fuller investigation of child rearing and family behaviour and training systems.

From some of these investigations and other indirect observations it should be possible to construct more information relevant to both the education and rehabilitation of these people.

I heard recently from Gratten Puxon and though he did mention some work he had done he did not enclose any copy of it, I would welcome the opportunity to read anything you can let me see.

You ask whether it would be possible for me to visit London and meet Vaida Voewod. Perhaps you would let me know as soon as possible the most suitable dates and times to visit and I am almost certain I can arrange to conform to them. This would certainly give us the opportunity to discuss the general problems and matters organisational as well.

Re: the TV paper you mention. I have ^{not} been on the University site for 2 -3 weeks, I think what you refer to is the brief progress report of the working party of the Noble Committee on Television written by James Halloran its secretary. If so I have not yet seen a copy myself but when I am next at the University I will endeavour to get a copy from the University Bookshop.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



(David H. Smith)